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REMARKS

The present response is intended to be fully responsive to all points of objection and/or rejection raised by the Examiner and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Applicants assert that the present invention is new, non-obvious and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Status of Claims

Claims 5 and 6 are pending. Claims 5 and 6 have been rejected.

Claim 5 has been amended herein. Applicant respectfully asserts that the amendments to the claims add no new subject matter.

Examiner Interview

The undersigned attorney of record thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended during a telephonic interview on January 12, 2012, during which the undersigned attorney and the Examiner discussed amendments to the claims to overcome the rejections of record. The Examiner agreed that amendment of independent claim 5 to add the word "planar" before "face" in the "providing" step would distinguish over Barkley; this amendment finds support in the drawings, specifically Figs. 1 and 2. The Examiner also agreed to amendment of claim 5 such that the thickness of the vaporized material that is deposited on the substrate would be described as "var[ying] progressively so as to increase substantially continuously in a direction along the substrate"; this amendment finds support at page 2, lines 8-12 of the specification as filed.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

In the final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over Barkley (U.S. Patent No. 2,676,114) in view of Okamoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,520,716). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

With regard to independent claim 5, the Examiner states that Barkley does not teach that a separate mask is used for each different vapor source but contends that this feature is

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disclosed by Okamoto, and concludes that it would have been obvious to modify Barkley on the basis of Okamoto and to thereby arrive at the present invention.

Applicants do not agree with the Examiner's analysis and stand by all of the arguments already of record. In addition, Applicants have herein amended independent claim 5 to further emphasize the differences between the present invention and the cited references, in an effort to advance the prosecution of this case.

Applicants previously argued that Barkley teaches the use of point sources, and Okamoto teaches elongation of sources and uses band-like sources, i.e., 1-dimensional sources, in contrast to the present claims that require material to be deposited from a face of a 2-dimensional source. The Examiner responded by stating that this limitation is not found in the claims.

In response, Applicants have amended the method of independent claim 5 to recite the step of "providing at least two vapor sources, each vapor source having a planar face". Applicants assert that the present invention would not work with point or band-like sources as disclosed in Barkley and Okamoto. Applicants assert further that there is no disclosure or suggestion in either of Barkley or Okamoto that would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to use a 2-dimensional source as required by the amended claims.

Applicants also previously argued that neither Barkley nor Okamoto allows linear variation from a non-zero starting concentration through to a pre-determined maximum concentration across the full length of the substrate, i.e., neither teaches or suggests positioning each mask such that the vaporized material is deposited on the substrate in a thickness that increases substantially continuously in a direction along the substrate. The Examiner responded by stating that a thickness that increases "substantially continuously" is not synonymous with a thickness that increases "continuously".

In response, Applicants have amended the method of independent claim 5 to recite that the thickness of the vaporized material that is deposited on the substrate "varies progressively so as to increase substantially continuously in a direction along the substrate". Neither Barkley nor Okamoto provides such a deposited vaporized material.

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In view of the foregoing, Applicants assert that amended independent claim 5 is allowable. Claim 6 directly depends from amended independent claim 5 and therefore includes all the limitations of that claim. Therefore, Applicants respectfully assert that claim 6 is likewise allowable. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw his rejection to amended independent claim 5 and to claim 6 dependent thereon.

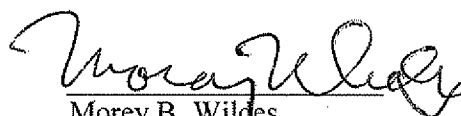
Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants assert that the pending claims are allowable.

Should the Examiner have any question or comment as to the form, content or entry of this Amendment, or if there are any further issues yet to be resolved to advance the prosecution of this application to issue, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned counsel.

Please charge any fees associated with this paper to deposit account No. 50-3355.

Respectfully submitted,



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